

Republicans for the debt and the hampering of a stronger recovery. The authors of this op-ed claim that “while the deficit has remained high over the past 3 years, that is largely a result of the policies of the previous Republican administration.”

Let's take a look at the actual deficit numbers. Labeling the last three deficits as “high” is quite an understatement. According to President Obama's own budget numbers, in 2009 the deficit was \$1.4 trillion. In 2010 the deficit was \$1.3 trillion. In 2011 it was, again, \$1.3 trillion. The deficit this year is expected to top \$1.3 trillion.

At the end of the budget window, in 2022, the deficit is projected to be \$704 billion. The highest deficit under President Bush was \$458 billion, in 2008. Every deficit under President Obama has been almost three times that figure—more than double. But President Obama should not be accountable for the debt problem? How does that work?

The President and his supporters like to point out that the budget contains \$4 trillion in deficit reduction over the next 10 years. But most of this reduction is based on new taxes and gimmicks, such as alleged “savings” from actions that Congress has already taken or from ending operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As a USA Today editorial quoted today:

[The budget] relies on gimmicks and avoids some problems instead of tackling them. . . . Most glaringly, Obama takes credit for about \$850 billion in savings from winding down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, which were paid for with borrowed money in the first place.

These were not actual savings. The Committee for a Responsible Budget put it this way:

When you finish college, you don't suddenly have thousands of dollars a year to spend elsewhere. In fact, you have to find a way to pay back your loans.

Regarding the supposed problem of Republican resistance to demand-based policies, there is a major misconception that consumption fueled by government spending actually creates jobs. This is the stimulus myth. It does not. It just inefficiently moves money around from one pocket to another or one taxpayer to another. That helps explain why the stimulus failed.

If Americans cannot spend enough money to stimulate more demand, how can the Government accomplish that for us? It is our money that is being spent. Simply put, demand policies do not work. There have been ample opportunities to prove otherwise in recent years. Let's remember the President got everything he wanted from Congress during his first 2 years in office. He has been in office a little over 3 years. The first 2 years there was a Democratic House and a Democratic Senate. The 111th Congress passed all of the demand-based policies he asked for: spending, temporary tax credits, tax holidays, the stimulus. Yet here we are.

A better idea is to encourage economic activity and greater opportunity through the supply side of the economy. That means reducing government consumption of taxpayer dollars and not raising taxes on anyone, especially job creators.

That brings me to the third set of claims involving the notion of “balance.” The authors claim the budget “calls for a balanced approach . . . with everyone sharing responsibility for deficit reduction.” They also note that balance is “missing from the GOP approach.”

Balance in the Obama budget, of course, means higher taxes. I ask how is it balanced to tax job-creating small businesses even more than they are being taxed today?

According to the Joint Committee on Taxation, nearly 750,000 flow-through businesses—these are the small businesses, the businesses that pay their taxes as individuals—nearly 750,000 would be subject to the President's proposed tax rate hikes that would take effect on January 1 of next year. One-quarter of our Nation's workforce depends on these employers for a paycheck.

According to the National Federation of Independent Businesses, up to 25 percent of the workforce is employed by businesses that will be affected by the President's proposed tax hikes. Perhaps job growth is so slow because these job creators are skittish because they do not have certainty, and they certainly have not for a long time. In fact, the only thing they can see is the President's attempts to impose more taxes on them.

The specter of tax hikes has loomed for years and has inhibited job growth. If the tax increases actually occur, we can be sure any economic growth we might be perceiving will be killed.

Finally, the authors claim the President “has demonstrated that he was willing to go the extra mile to reach a bipartisan deficit reduction agreement.” I will note that the debt talks fell apart last summer because the President dug in his heels and insisted on harmful tax increases that Republicans, of course, opposed, for the reasons I just noted. When we had another opportunity to do something about the debt this fall, the President was not particularly helpful or encouraging. Often missing in action, he never participated in the process. The plan put forward by the Republican Senator from Pennsylvania at the time was the only balanced approach that put significant revenue on the table in the context of progrowth tax reform.

The majority whip called it a “break-through,” but it was never enough for the other side. So here we are, still debating this subject. So much for the President going the extra mile.

In conclusion, I would like to say the President's budget is more of the same spending, taxes, and debt we have seen for the last 3 years. Last year the budget was so unpopular with the American

people that the Senate voted it down 97 to 0. Not a single member of the President's party voted for his budget. The massive amounts of spending, taxing, and borrowing in his budget will hinder an economic recovery. In times like these we have to focus on growing our economy, not our Government and debt.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 3606

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, on behalf of the Republican leader, I ask unanimous consent, notwithstanding any other rule of the Senate, that immediately following the disposition of the pending Transportation bill, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3606, a bill received from the House, which would increase American job creation and economic growth by improving access to the public capital markets for emerging growth companies; I further ask that the bill remain the pending business to the exclusion of all other business until it is disposed of.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. REID. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, last week the House passed their jobs bill. The purpose of that bill was to loosen securities regulations for small businesses. It is what they call a jobs act. It is not going to create a lot of jobs, but it is important legislation. The House passed a bill 390 to 23 last Thursday. The White House issued a statement supporting the legislation.

This piece of legislation clearly needs to be brought before the Senate as soon as we can. We will work to get a consent agreement and provide for the consideration of a handful of amendments to the legislation. I would be more than happy to work with the Senator to get a short time agreement for its consideration.

One of the issues I alert my friends to is that we have been working diligently for a way to get the Import/Export Bank reauthorized. It is so important to do that. I met recently with the head of Boeing. It is so important for their business and many other businesses. It is a job-creating measure.

I am not going to have that hold up this legislation, but at least I am going to have a substitute we can dispose of

quickly if I can't get my friends to agree to do this, to have a vote on that. There are a few things we need to do.

I suggest to everyone I know how important this is to get finished. I don't need anybody to suggest we are not going to do that. We are. I wish to get it done this work period. In Senate time, that is pretty fast because we don't have the bill yet from the House. That is why I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, I appreciate what the majority leader said. He is right about the importance of the legislation approved by majorities of both parties of the House of Representatives. I join him in hoping we can bring this to the floor as soon as possible with an agreement so we can consider it and try to provide some economic growth so people can go back to work in America.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 408, 441, 461, 462, 463, 464, 497, 509, 510, 528, 568, 569, 570, 571, 610, 612, and 613.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will state the nominations.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Gina Marie Groh, of West Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of West Virginia.

David Nuffer, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

Michael Walter Fitzgerald, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Ronnie Abrams, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Rudolph Contreras, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Miranda Du, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Susie Morgan, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Gregg Jeffrey Costa, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

David Campos Guaderrama, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.

Brian C. Wimes, of Missouri, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern and Western Districts of Missouri.

Kristine Gerhard Baker, of Arkansas, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Arkansas.

John Z. Lee, of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

George Levi Russell, III, of Maryland, to be United States District Judge for the District of Maryland.

John J. Tharp, Jr., of Illinois, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Illinois.

Jeffrey J. Helmick, of Ohio, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of Ohio.

Mary Geiger Lewis, of South Carolina, to be United States District Judge for the District of South Carolina.

Timothy S. Hillman, of Massachusetts, to be United States District Judge for the District of Massachusetts.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have cloture motions relative to each of these district court nominees at the desk, and I ask unanimous consent that it be in order for them to be filed now.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection? Without objection, it is so ordered.

The cloture motions having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motions:

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTIONS

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Gina Marie Groh, of West Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the Northern District of West Virginia.

Harry Reid, Joe Manchin III, Sherrod Brown, Tom Udall, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Herb Kohl, Bill Nelson, Frank R. Lautenberg, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Dianne Feinstein, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Joseph I. Lieberman, Charles E. Schumer.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of David Nuffer, of Utah, to be United States District Judge for the District of Utah.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Michael Walter Fitzgerald, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California.

Harry Reid, Joe Manchin III, Sherrod Brown, Tom Udall, Patty Murray, Mark Begich, Herb Kohl, Bill Nelson, Frank R. Lautenberg, Jeanne Shaheen, Richard Blumenthal, Benjamin L. Cardin, Christopher A. Coons, Dianne Feinstein, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Joseph I. Lieberman, Charles E. Schumer.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Ronnie Abrams, of New York, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennett, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Rudolph Contreras, of Virginia, to be United States District Judge for the District of Columbia.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Miranda Du, of Nevada, to be United States District Judge for the District of Nevada.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Susie Morgan, of Louisiana, to be United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Louisiana.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of Gregg Jeffrey Costa, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

Harry Reid, Patrick J. Leahy, Richard J. Durbin, Mark R. Warner, Herb Kohl, Mark Udall, Christopher A. Coons, Tom Udall, Benjamin L. Cardin, Sheldon Whitehouse, Amy Klobuchar, Al Franken, Jeanne Shaheen, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Charles E. Schumer, Michael F. Bennet, Jeff Merkley.

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, hereby move to bring to a close the debate on the nomination of David Campos Guaderrama, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Western District of Texas.